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Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation
Second session
Almaty, 25-27 August 2003

Draft report

Chapter I
Introduction

1. In its resolution 56/180, the General Assembly decided to convene in 2003 the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation to review the current situation of transit transport systems, including the implementation of Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation between Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and the Donor Community of 1995, and to formulate, inter alia, appropriate policy measures and action-orientated programmes aimed at developing efficient transit transport systems.

2. In its resolution 57/242, the General Assembly decided that the open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Conference would hold two sessions, that the sixth Meeting of Governmental Experts from Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions, to be held in New York from 23 to 27 June 2003, would serve as the first session and would address both substantive and organizational matters, and that the Meeting of Senior Officials, to be held at Almaty from 25 to 27 August 2003, would serve as the second session.

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Chapter II
Organizational matters

A. Opening and duration of the second session

3. The Preparatory Committee held its second session in Almaty from 25 to 27 August 2003. During the course of its session, the Committee held ___ plenary meetings to consider all the agenda items, including the draft outcome of the Conference, and ___ informal meetings.

4. The Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States was designated by the General Assembly as the Secretary-General of the Conference and his Office was responsible for coordination and the substantive secretariat, while the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, served as secretariat of the Preparatory Committee.

5. The session was opened by Antonio Bernardini, Vice-Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, who conducted the election of the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee.

B. Officers

6. At its 1st meeting, on 25 August 2003, the Preparatory Committee elected by acclamation Yoshiyuki Motomura, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, as Chairman of its second session.

C. Adoption of the agenda

7. At the same meeting, on 25 August 2003, the Preparatory Committee adopted its provisional agenda and organization of work (A/CONF.202/PC/4) as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Election of the Chairman.
4. Consideration of the draft outcome of the Conference.
5. Other business.
6. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its second session.

D. Documentation

8. The Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Provisional agenda and organization of work (A/CONF.202/PC/4);

(b) Report of the Preparatory Committee on its first session (A/CONF.202/PC/5);

(c) Provisional rules of procedure for the Conference (A/CONF.202/PC/3).

Chapter III
Organization of work

9. At the 1st plenary meeting, on 25 August 2003, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee made a statement on the substantive and organizational aspects of the work of the Committee.

10. The Secretary-General of the Conference made a statement on the organizational and substantive aspects of the work of the Conference.

11. The representative of the host country, Kazakhstan, Kazhmurat I. Nagmanov, Minister of Transport and Communication, made a statement.

Chapter IV
Consideration of the draft outcome of the Conference

12. The Committee considered item 4 of its agenda at six meetings, held from 25 to 27 August 2003. Representatives of Member States made comments and suggestions on the Chairman's text of the draft outcome document, entitled "Almaty Programme of Action: [Partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries]/[A new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries]" (A/CONF.202/PC/5, annex).

Action taken by the Preparatory Committee

13. Based on those comments and suggestions, at its sixth meeting the Preparatory Committee adopted a final draft of the outcome document and recommended it to the Conference for its consideration and adoption (see chap. V).

14. The Committee also considered the draft Almaty Declaration submitted by Kazakhstan at the 1st meeting of the Preparatory Committee, on 25 August 2003, and recommended it to the Conference for its consideration and adoption (see chap. V).

Chapter V
Recommendations of the Preparatory Committee

15. The Committee recommends to the Conference for its consideration and adoption the draft Almaty Programme of Action: [Partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries]/[A new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries], which is contained in annex I to the present report.

16. The Committee also recommends to the Conference for its consideration and adoption the draft Almaty Declaration, which is contained in annex II to the present report.

Chapter VI
Adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee on its second session

17. At the ___ meeting on 27 August, Limakatso Motjope (Kingdom of Lesotho), as Vice-Chairperson with rapporteurial responsibilities, introduced the draft report of the Preparatory Committee on its second session (A/CONF.202/PC.2/L.1).

18. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft report as orally amended.

Annex I

Chairman's text

Almaty Programme of Action:

[Partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries]

[A new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries]

[Final draft text to be inserted]

Annex II

Draft text submitted by Kazakhstan

Almaty Declaration

We, the Governments participating in the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation,

Having gathered in Almaty in August 2003 to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and the establishment of efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1] in which heads of State and Government recognized the particular needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries and urged both bilateral and multilateral donors to increase financial and technical assistance to this group of countries to meet their particular development needs and to help them to overcome the impediments of geography by improving their transit transport systems, and resolving to create an environment, at the national and global levels alike, that is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty,

Having adopted the Almaty Programme of Action: [Partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries]/[A new global framework for transit transport cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries],

Declare that:

1. *We believe* that increased trade is essential for the economic growth and sustainable development of developing countries. However, the participation of landlocked developing countries in international trade is severely limited by lack of access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from major international markets;

2. *We recognize* that a major reason for the marginalization of landlocked developing countries from the global trading system is high trade transaction costs. Trade and transport are inextricably linked. Transport costs are a key determinant of international trade competitiveness, regional integration and the attainment of balanced national development. Excessive transport costs result in a major barrier to foreign markets and trade growth;

3. *We commit* ourselves to work towards minimizing the current marginalization and the beneficial integration of landlocked developing countries into the global economy. We will help landlocked developing countries expand their trade flows by (a) securing unfettered access to the sea by all means of transport, (b) reducing costs and improving services so as to increase the competitiveness of their exports, (c) reducing the delivered costs of imports, (d) freeing trade routes

[1] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

from delays and uncertainties, (e) developing adequate national networks and (f) reducing loss, damage and deterioration of goods en route. We will achieve those goals by promoting the establishment of efficient transit systems in both landlocked and transit developing countries;

4. *We believe* that transit transport cooperation is of considerable mutual benefit to both landlocked and transit developing countries. While we are aware that the transit countries concerned are themselves developing countries, often of broadly similar economic structure and beset by a scarcity of resources similar to that of the landlocked developing countries, they will doubtlessly benefit from having their landlocked neighbours become more prosperous as a consequence of increased trade;

5. *We reaffirm* the right of access of landlocked countries to and from the sea and freedom of transit through the territory of transit countries by all means of transport, as set forth in article 125 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;[2]

6. *We also reaffirm* that transit countries, in the exercise of their full sovereignty over their territory, have the right to appropriate measures necessary to ensure that the rights and facilities provided for landlocked countries in no way infringe upon their legitimate interests;

7. *We recognize* that the primary responsibility for establishing effective transit systems rests with the landlocked and transit developing countries. We thus call upon them to implement measures to further strengthen their cooperative and collaborative efforts to address transit transport issues by improving the physical infrastructure and non-physical aspects of transit transport systems, and in this respect we emphasize the role of South-South cooperation;

8. *We invite* donor countries, the United Nations Development Programme and multilateral financial and development institutions to provide landlocked and transit developing countries with increased financial and technical assistance in the form of grants or concessional loans for the construction, maintenance and improvement of their transport, storage and other transit-related facilities, and to promote subregional, regional and interregional projects and programmes aimed at improving the availability and optimal use of different transport modes and inter-modal efficiency along transport corridors;

9. *We also emphasize* that the private sector should play a larger role in expanding the physical infrastructure of landlocked developing countries. There is as yet scant private sector participation in transportation-related projects in the landlocked developing countries. Bringing the much-needed resources of the private sector to bear on the geographic challenges faced by landlocked developing countries will greatly enhance their trade and development prospects;

10. *We note* the important role that the simplification, harmonization and standardization of transit procedures and documentation as well as the application of information technologies have played in enhancing the efficiency of transit systems,

[2] See *The Law of the Sea: Official Texts of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and of the Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 with Index and Excerpts from the Final Act of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.V.10).

and call upon relevant entities of the United Nations and other international organizations, including the World Bank, the regional commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization, to expand their assistance extended to landlocked and transit developing countries in those areas, in accordance with their respective mandates;

11. *We recall* the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization,[3] which recognized the case for further expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit, and the need for enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building in this area, and agreed that negotiations would take place after the fifth session of the Ministerial Conference on the basis of a decision to be taken, by explicit consensus, at that session on the modalities for negotiations. Landlocked and transit developing countries can benefit from trade facilitation, including freedom of transit and simpler customs procedures. Any strengthening of the relevant World Trade Organization provisions should be pursued with those objectives in mind and should be a catalyst for the adoption of several of the measures recommended in the Almaty Programme of Action;

12. *We consider* that the current negotiation on market access for agricultural and non-agricultural goods should consider giving particular attention to products of export interest to landlocked developing countries, taking into consideration the high trade transaction costs dictated by their geographical disadvantaged situation;

13. *We invite* those countries that have not done so to consider ratifying or acceding to international agreements and conventions related to transit trade and transport. We also invite the international community to continue providing technical and financial support to landlocked and transit developing countries to assist them in that respect;

14. *We emphasize* the critical importance of regular and effective follow-up to the Conference at the national, regional and global levels, and we commit ourselves to that end. We request the United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to ensure that the Conference be effectively followed up within the mandate provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001;

15. *We reaffirm* our commitment to facilitate the further development of landlocked developing countries and to the mitigation of the geographic handicaps characteristic of those countries. The establishment of efficient transit transport systems and the integration of landlocked developing countries into the global economy will only be achieved through genuine partnerships between landlocked and transit developing countries, with the assistance of their development partners and through partnerships between the private and public sectors.

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[3] A/C.2/56/7, annex.